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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to determine the causes for the paucity of Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA) chapters in the State of Oregon. Seventy trade and industrial teachers were asked to respond via mailed questionnaire as to why VICA clubs were absent in their schools. It was concluded that the presence of VICA in Oregon seems to be directly related to the amount of exposure of the teacher to the workings of youth group activities. The study clearly indicated that some form of preparation is vital to the success of VICA, or any youth organization in the school. Some suggestions offered were to provide extra pay for working with youth groups, offer inservice and preservice education, and offer workshops with immediate followup. The study includes a discussion of the problem, description of the procedures, analysis and presentation of the data with conclusions, and recommendations. A sample instrument is included along with comments written in on the questionnaire. (NJ)

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A

STUDY OF VICA IN OREGON

BY

JOHN E. BARTON

ED-501

RESEARCH

VT-102-674

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Statement of the Problem

Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, herinafter referred to as VICA, the youth organization for students in vocational Trade and Industrial programs, is thought to be less than a thriving success in Oregon.

Nationally, VICA is considered a success. In 1974 there were approximately 155,000 active members in schools throughout the United States and, although VICA has grown in Oregon, its rate of growth is disappointing. (Tabe I)

Table I

VOCATIONAL YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS IN OREGON HIGH SCHOOLS*

	# OF CHAPTERS	% OF CHAPTERS	73-74 MEMBERSHIP	% OF TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
FFA	103	.40	4544	.59
FBLA/PBL	50	.20	1021	.13
FHA	54	.22	886	.11
DECA	31	.12	781	.10
VICA	14	.06	505	.07

*Oregon State Plan for Vocational Education-FY 1975

A number of educators interested in promoting VICA feel that Trade and Industrial instructors throughout the state lack the information necessary to help them form and advise a chapter. Other educators express the opinion that some Trade and Industrial instructors feel incompetent to direct club activities because they lack necessary formal training.

As part of a program to disseminate information relative to the value of VICA in the total development of the individual, the state advisor for VICA has issued newsletters and information brochures, has made visits to schools, and has held numerous workshops in efforts to promote VICA, but little progress has been made in increasing the number of chapters.

Participants have left workshops with a high degree of enthusiasm for VICA, but unfortunately this enthusiasm, for whatever reason, rapidly wanes and disappears completely once the workshop is left behind. In July 1974, there were approved Trade and Industrial cluster programs in 124 Secondary schools; fourteen of these, representing 11% of the total eligible schools had chartered VICA chapters.(1) The central purpose of this study is to determine the cause(s) for the absence of chartered VICA chapters in Oregon's high schools.

Purpose of the Study

(1) To determine if teachers feel competent to conduct VICA activities.
(2) To determine if teachers view VICA as part of the curriculum.
(3) To determine teacher personal reasons why VICA is not active in eligible schools.

Background of the Study

The historical background of VICA began in the early 1930's when a national organization called the Future Craftsmen of America was formed. (2) VICA, as it is now known, was established in May 1965, at a convention of state Trade and Industrial associations in Nashville, Tennessee. It was to be a co-curricular program, a national organization for Trade, Technical-Industrial, and Health education students, with the basic premise the development of student leadership qualities and industrial and technical skills, and the promotion of the dignity of work. (3)

Today the emphasis in education is on the student as an individual, unique and talented. In the opinion of many it is the responsibility of education

to help develop that talent - the leadership qualities and citizenship responsibilities - so that the student will have the competency to enter the world of work as producer, citizen, consumer, a total individual. VICA, it is argued, has the resources to provide the student with the opportunities to develop these leadership qualities and abilities through participation in club activities as member and officer. And, by participation in the Skill Olympics, wherein students pit their skill and knowledge against others in regional, state, and national competition, to develop the technical skills required as a worker.

What is it about youth groups that make them successful? What makes them attractive to boys and girls? Is it dynamic, concerned, adult leadership? Is it because they answer the needs of the youth, and provide for personal involvement? If adult leadership is necessary, what then can be done to foster adult participation, especially in VICA, so that students are not only offered youth group activities, but take advantage of the offer and become active, participating members? Students engaged in VICA activities loudly extoll its virtues. In "VICA, GOING PLACES" (4), students being interviewed exhibited an enthusiasm for VICA that proved infectious to listeners. These students expounded on the personal development aspect of VICA activities; how they gained measurably in self-confidence, in the ability to stand before a crowd and make a speech, in the feeling of belonging to a group, and the acceptance of responsibility through election to some office post within the chapter, the state, and the nation.

VICA club activities were to be co-curricular rather than extra-curricular. As part of the total development of the individual, citizenship and leadership activities were to be woven into the curriculum, to provide opportunities for learning that extra-curricular activities would not. It is the premist of its founders that most of all VICA activities can be offered within the curriculum, especially technical skills through regular shop classes, and leadership-citizenship growth through participation in such school activities as being a teacher-aide.

But students cannot do these things by themselves. The resources the adult has to offer are essential for the growth of the student. If, then, adult participation is necessary for the formation and survival of a youth group, and yet is absent, what are the reasons for its absence? The central purpose of this study, then, was to try to establish the reason(s) for this lack of adult participation, and use this knowledge to establish a program to foster and maintain the enthusiasm that is deemed so necessary for the adult to participate, and for the youth group to survive.

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2. DIRECTIONS - A Guide for VICA club advisors; Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, Inc., September 1973
3. Leadership Handbook; Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, Inc. 1974 Constitution, Article II
4. VICA-GOING PLACES; Film, National Offices of VICA, 1972

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURES

Preliminary Questionnaire

A study was made of various methods for conducting a research project before the medium of a mailed questionnaire was selected, primarily because of restrictions on travel and expense. To obtain background information necessary to form the questions for the questionnaire, a study of writings, periodicals, pamphlets and brochures relating exclusively to VICA were studied. A search of ERIC produced studies testifying to the benefits of youth organizations but none were found relating to why the absence of youth organizations.

Interviews were held with the state advisor and numerous Trade and Industrial instructors to determine the scope of the problem. A consensus of opinion indicated that the prime consideration for the success of any youth organization is its leadership. A dynamic and dedicated leader is needed to infuse students with an enthusiasm to participate. Therefore, questions that would serve to elicit information from the sample population to establish their degree of enthusiasm and belief in youth organizations had to be composed. A preliminary questionnaire (Illustration #1) was composed and submitted to a jury of vocational-industrial students at Oregon State University.

Suggestions for deletion or inclusion of statements to strengthen the instrument were studied and discussed with advisors. Following this, a second and broader questionnaire was developed and submitted to a jury of 16 EPDA fellows at Oregon State University. Recommendations for change were again studied and discussed with advisors before the final questionnaire was developed.

Final Questionnaire

The final questionnaire (Illustration #2) was developed and adopted as the research instrument. The questionnaire contained questions designed to elicit

the kind(s) of information and recommendations from respondents which could be used by administrative personnel to help develop and further the establishment of youth activity groups, particularly in the Trade and Industrial area.

Population and Sample

The population to be sampled (Table #2) was 258 Trade and Industrial teachers in 120 schools with approved vocational-Industrial programs. It is not known how many of the instructors have a college degree, nor how many were hired out of industry. However, all are vocationally certified, having met the major requirement of possessing work experience in their teaching area. The instrument from which the sample was chosen is the Trade and Industrial Directory, 1973-74, issued by the State Department of Education Trade and Industrial Specialists. The directory contains the name and address of all schools which have approved Trade and Industrial cluster programs. It also has the names and specialty areas of all Trade and Industrial instructors in these schools. The Trade and Industrial areas are: Metals, Graphics, Construction, Electricity-Electronics, and Industrial Mechanics.

Distribution of Questionnaire

Schools identified as having an active VICA chapter were eliminated from the sample. Since the purpose of the study was to determine why teachers and not schools did not have a VICA chapter, it was necessary to take the sample from those schools where no chapter existed. It was determined that any school which had a VICA chapter necessarily had interested teachers, even though all teachers were not necessarily involved in club activities. It was disinterested teachers we wished to survey, and the best place to find them was in schools where no VICA chapter existed.

ILLUSTRATION #1

1. VICA is unknown to me____.
2. VICA is an integral part of the curriculum___.
3. The administration does not care about VICA____.
4. Students don't want VICA___.
5. I don't believe in VICA or youth groups___.
6. Other teachers don't want VICA responsibility____.
7. There are too many youth groups in the school now____.
8. I want VICA but get no help from Administration___.
   Collegues___.
   State Advisor___.
9. I have no time for VICA___.
10. VICA activities should be conducted only after school or on week-ends_____.
11. Teachers should be paid for VICA____.
12. Teachers should receive instruction in youth organizations in:
    In-Service classes____; Undergraduate school____.
13. I could have been better prepared for leading and organizing youth group activities_____.

ILLUSTRATION #2

I teach: METALS____INDUSTRIAL MECHANICS___CONSTRUCTION____
ELECTRICITY-ELECTRONICS____

A VICA CLUB HAS NOT BEEN ORGANIZED IN MY SCHOOL BECAUSE.....

1. VICA is unknown____.
2. Teachers should be instructed in youth organizations in Undergraduate school____.
3. Teachers should be instructed in youth organizations in 'In-Service' Education____.
4. I could have been better prepared to advise a VICA club if I had had some or more training in Parliamentary Procedure, Committee Activities, and Developing Leadership____.
5. I have no time for VICA____.
6. VICA activities should be conducted only after school____.
7. Teachers should be paid extra for after-school activities such as VICA____.
8. VICA can be an integral part of the curriculum____.
9. The administration does not want VICA____.
10. Students are not interested in VICA____.
11. I do not personally believe in VICA____.
12. Other Trade & Industrial teachers don't want VICA responsibility____.
13. There are too many youth organizations in the school already____.
14. I want VICA but get no help from Administration____.
15. I want VICA but get no help from Collegues____.
16. I want VICA but get no help from the State Advisor____.

COMMENTS:_____
_____
_____
_____

ILLUSTRATION 2 (Cont'd)

Dear Educator,

VICA, the youth group for Industrial Education programs, is thought to be a vital tool in the development of the Leadership-Citizenship qualities of the student. It is also thought that VICA is an authentic tool to provide students with opportunities to develop those skills which they will find necessary to adapt to the industrial-technical society inwo which they will be moving upon graduation from high school.

VICA has not been as successful in Oregon as in other parts of the United States, and there is concern in some areas of education over its absence. Because of this, and in an effort to provide state leaders with information which will permit them to design and develop orograms - in-service, teacher education, etc.- to facilitate the incorporation of VICA into the curriculum, you are being asked to provide input in the form of suggestions, criticism, etc.

The attached questionnaire asks for your answers to some questions thought to be relevant to understanding the problems of VICA in Oregon. Answer ONLY those questions which you find relevant and which most clearly identify your feelings and ideas. Nowhere on the questionnaire will you be asked to identify yourself or your school.

Please use the enclosed stamped envelope to return your questionnaire.

Thank you for your time and suggestions.

Table #2

A. Population and Sample of Schools and Teachers

	Population			
	With VICA Chapters	Without VICA Chapters	Sample	Percent in Sample Without VICA chapter
Schools	---	120	60	50%
Teachers	450	258	70	27%

B. Respondents to Questionnaire

	Number	Percent
Respondents	42	60%
Non-Respondents	28	40%
Total	70	100%

C. Industrial Specialty of Respondents

Industrial Specialty	Number	Percent
Industrial Mechanics	18	43%
Construction	9	21%
Electricity-Electronics	9	21%
Metals	6	14%
Totals	42	99%

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

The sample population was asked to respond only to those questions they felt relevant to their particular situation. Questions left unanswered were considered as 'no' answers. Respondents needed to react to only one question in a group to be counted in that group. Each question, regardless of the group it is in, can stand alone and carries the concept of the group. It was not necessary for the respondents to answer all questions in the group. Grouping served to identify basic ideas, but it was felt that total responses to individual questions was of greatest importance.

Group #1

Objective: To determine if teachers feel sufficiently prepared to conduct VICA activities.

Thirty-three of the forty-two respondents (82%) answered the questions in this group. Questions in the group are:

1. VICA is unknown.
2. Teachers should be instructed in youth organizations in Undergraduate school.
3. Teachers should be instructed in youth organizations in 'In-Service' Education.
4. I could have been better prepared to advise a VICA club if I had had some or more training in Parliamentary Procedure, Committee Activities, and Developing Leadership.

Analysis: Seventy percent (29) of the total number of respondents indicated they could have been better prepared (item #4). The next highest response, fifty-five percent (23), of the respondents indicated that this could have been accomplished through 'In-Service' education (item #3). Twenty-eight percent (12) of the respondents indicated they could have been better prepared through Undergraduate education (item #2). Sixteen percent (7) of the respondents claimed that VICA was unknown to them.

The responses in this group tend to indicate that teacher preparation is the single most significant factor in the absence of VICA in eligible schools. It seems safe to say that teachers feel they are ill-prepared to advise youth club activities. Also it appears teacher preparation would eliminate ignorance of the existence of VICA and thus provide another plus factor in the eventual establishment of a chapter.

Figure 1

Group #1

Question	Yes	No	Total	Pct. 'Yes'
Vica Unknown	7	35	42	.16
Undergraduate School Education	12	30	42	.28
In-Service Education	23	19	42	.55
More training in Parliamentary Procedure, Committee Activities, Leadership Development	29	13	42	.70

Group #2

Objective: To determine if teachers value VICA as part of the curriculum. Thirty-three of the forty-two respondents (82%) responded to the questions in this group. Questions in this group are:

1. I have no time for VICA.
2. VICA activities should be conducted only after school.
3. VICA can be an integral part of the curriculum.
4. Teachers should be paid extra for after-school activities such as VICA.

Fifty-five percent (23) of the respondents indicated they felt VICA could be an integral part of the curriculum (item #3). Forty-eight percent (20) of the respondents indicated they felt teachers should be paid extra (item #4). Forty percent (19) felt they had no time for VICA (item #1), and Fourteen percent (6) felt that VICA should be conducted only after school.
It would seem that although VICA can be an integral part of the curriculum teachers feel they do not have time for it, whether they are paid for participation in club activities or not. It might also be interpreted that VICA could be an integral part of the curriculum if teachers were paid for participation in club activities.

Figure 2

Group #2

Question	Yes	No	Total	Pct.'yes'
No time for VICA	19	23	42	.40%
Should be after school	6	36	42	.14%
Part of the curriculum	23	19	42	.55
Should be paid extra	20	22	42	.48

Group #3

Objective: To determine personal reasons why VICA is not active in eligible schools.

Twenty-six of the forty-two respondents (62%) of the sample responded to the questions in this group. Questions in this group are:

1. The administration does not want VICA.
2. Students are not interested in VICA.
3. I do not personally believe in VICA.
4. Other T&I teachers don't want VICA responsibility.
5. There are too many youth organizations in school now.
6. I want VICA but get no help from Administration.
7. I want VICA but get no help from Collegues.
8. I want VICA but get no help from the State Advisor.

Fifty percent (21) of the sample indicated they felt other teachers don't want VICA responsibility (item #4). Nineteen percent (8) of the respondents did not believe in VICA (item #3), and also felt there were too many youth organizations in the school now (item #5).

It is felt by the author that the response to Item #4 is a catch-all answer and could accurately reflect respondents' dis-interest in not only VICA but other club activities as well. Questions 7, 8, and 9 begin positively, but are negative in placing responsibility on others. These may be 'safe' answers in that no criticism can be leveled at respondent.

Figure 3

Group #3

Question	Yes	No	Total	Pct. Yes
Administration	6	36	42	.14%
Student interest	12	20	42	.29%
Personal believ	8	34	42	.19%
Other teachers	21	21	42	.50%
Too many clubs now	8	34	42	.19%
No help from Administration	4	38	42	.095
No help from Collegues	2	40	42	.048
No help from State Advisor	2	40	42	.048

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Restatement of the Problem

VICA, the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, Inc., is not as successful in Oregon as it is in other areas of the United States. Some authorities feel the absence of VICA chapters in eligible schools is because Trade and Industrial teachers lack the necessary training to participate in youth club activities; others have the opinion teachers feel incompetent for a variety of reasons. The purpose of this study is to determine the cause(s) for the paucity of VICA chapters in Oregon.

Summary

Through the medium of a mailed questionnaire, seventy Trade and Industrial teachers, representing 50% of the total eligible schools, were asked to respond to a series of questions designed to elicit information serving to answer the basic question: Why is VICA absent in your school? The teachers were randomly chosen from t he schools which had approved Trade and Industrial cluster programs, and without a VICA chapter. Seventy teachers were selected as the sample, with forty-two (60%) responding.

Conclusion

The presence of VICA in Oregon seems to be directly related to the amount of instructional exposure of the Trade and Industrial teacher to the workings of youth group activities. If the teacher has not received instruction in what VICA is or how it can be integrated with the curriculum, and is not convinced of the value of club activities to the student, then VICA will more probably not be part of his offerings to the student.

The study clearly indicates that some form of teacher preparation is vital to the success of VICA, or any youth club in the school. Pre-service and in-service education is needed to eliminate ignorance of the existence and purpose of VICA. It is needed to generate enthusiasm in the mind of the teacher.

Other than preparation, or lack of it, the study indicates that extra pay for working with a youth group would enhance the possibility of its establishment. The study also indicates that VICA can be an integral part of the curriculum, but it is apparently viewed as being extra-curricular. It is difficult to determine if those teachers who voted for extra pay regard VICA as being extra-curricular. Twelve of the twenty-three who said it could be part of the curriculum also said teachers should receive extra pay for youth club activities.

Numerous comments (Appendix A) were added by respondents. Twenty-three comments were were made. Thirty-five percent (8) of those who made comment made direct reference to lack of time for either teacher or student. Other comments criticised administration and those who seem to be pushing VICA.

Implications

It is doubtful if VICA can ever be a significant factor in Trade and Industrial curriculum if pre-service and in-service education is not made an integral part of teacher preparation. The resistance to VICA as part of the curriculum seems to stem from the teachers' lack of confidence in his ability to present the club, in toto, to students. Trade and Industrial teachers use FFA as an example of good teacher preparation, and lament their own lack of preparation. When VICA workshops are offered the teachers cannot get released to attend, or if they do attend many find fault with the presentation. It can be speculated that the teacher feels his attendance at the workshop will go well on his record and so has little real interest in the proceedings.

Those who present workshops should include immediate and effective follow-up as part of the program. Teachers leave workshops full of enthusiasm, but it

wanes once they return to their school, in part because there is no concerted follow-up from those who presented the workshop. It can be speculated further that this absence of follow-up causes the teacher to feel discouraged and doubt the sincerity of those who profess to foster VICA's growth.

Another idea to be considered is to have workshops at the schools, and include students in the activities. If student interst is originally lacking, a workshop which calls upon them to participate could generate the enthusiasm necessary to carry the work forward. If teachers returning from workshops are discouraged by lack of student interest, this could be alleviated by imbuing thestudents with enthusiasm by their participation in the activities of the workshop. This would take much of the pressure of organization off the teacher and should help facilitate formation of a chapter.

Suggestions for further study

The author fully realizes the incompleteness of this study. The study can be expanded and refined to obtain different, and more intensive, information which should facilitate the growth of not only VICA but other youth club activities as well. The study was entered into with the thought in mind that the worth of youth clubs was firmly established. This may not be the case. Too, comparisons between answers, notably those from a single individual which seem to be contradictory, could provide invaluable information to the proponents of youth clubs.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE COMMENTS

1. I felt VICA at my school did not develop properly because the administration did not help me at all. This program can be such an asset if we can get it started properly. Everybody must help - Faculty, Administration, and Students.

2. VICA is known by me but I have not found time to promote it and doubt if I would have time to advise a group. I do, however, feel it is worthwhile.

3. Class loads too heavy. Shops improperly equipped. No time for VICA or anything else.

4. The biggest problem is time committed by both advisor and students.

5. This appears to me as another of the many groups that are mostly smoke and no fire - that do very little toward a meaningful assistance toward giving the student the background he needs to do something! Not just talk about it.

6. I think there is a place for VICA in the schools but not in all schools. It really depends on how thin the instructor wants to cut his time up.

7. There is too little information and a lack of emphasis for this program. A little publicity and knowledge to the administrators would help. Many educators are not familiar with the organization, much less the name VICA.

8. Youth groups should not be conducted by teachers but by people in industry in much the same manner as Explorer scout programs.

9. Youth groups of any kind are not organized at my school.

10. VICA organization was tried - but either we failed to get the proper information promulgated or the students were not receptive at that time p maybe it's time again.

11. I think that youth groups, as other community groups, often split individuals from the rest of the school or community, and they therefore provide disunity to the community as a whole due to their individual interest. The communications and leadership skills can be implemented into a curriculum with a broad interest in life skills and provide for a more realistic attitude towards life and individuals, thereby removing special interest actitivies which often neglect concern and responsibility to the total school and/or community.

12. All of the T&I and Industrial Arts teachers are not willing to give up any of their free time after school, evenings, week-ends and vacations. We have seen how time consuming the FFA program is in our district. If this is any example of the responsibilities of VICA I am not interested in it. If all of VICA's activities can be contained in and during class time my co-workers would be interested.

13. It doesn't seem to me that VICA offers the tupe of activities which will really interest our students (Parliamentary meetings, etc.). We now do some of the activities in our classes which VICA might get involved in (field trips). I do feel teachers should get paid for a great deal of extra time put into clubs.

14. VICA was given every opportunity at our school - Administrative encouragement, meetings during school, offers of sponsorship from outside- but it simply wouldn't go. All 2000 students were contacted about VICA. Three joined the organization. I refunded the money and discontinued my efforts.

15. Should not be pushed onto kids by teachers. Should be undertaken by kids and run by teachers with teacher as advisor - not as the driving force. Don't try to sell teachers - try to sell students.

16. I don't believe the State Department of Education has required shool boards and Administrators to fully adopt state requirements in Vocational Education. Ag instructors are on 11 month contracts and I believe VICA advisors should be also.

17. I attended one meeting where VICA was being presented at the Thunderbird in Portland. The people in charge had absolutely no material to pass out about its functions or who to go to for material.

18. I have Football, Basketball, and Golf coaching duties and do not feel that I have the time.

19. Our school is over-loaded with youth activities but I feel a VICA group would be good. I get no support from students or others. I could use additional help.

20. If the administration is aware of this organization, no one would be able to recognize it by the effort they put forth.

21. VICA should be an integral part of the class. I support this concept but need help from staff to develop the program. They feel that time is an essence and have not enough time for regular classwork, let alone an outside club.

22. Biggest problem developing a program right now is I am building an Automotive program and my time is limited. I plan on trying VICA when we have a suitable program for all the students interested in VICA, not just the Vocational. I am hired to teach to the needs of all the students and therefore can not see a VICA club at the present time. Later this year maybe.

23. In small schools such as ours almost all of my boys and girls are on teams (football, basketball, volleyball, etc.). The others belong to photo club, annual, newspaper, etc., and because of the small number of students these groups are very small. Everybody already has almost every evening taken.

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